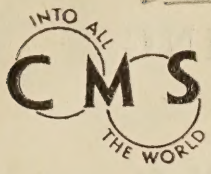


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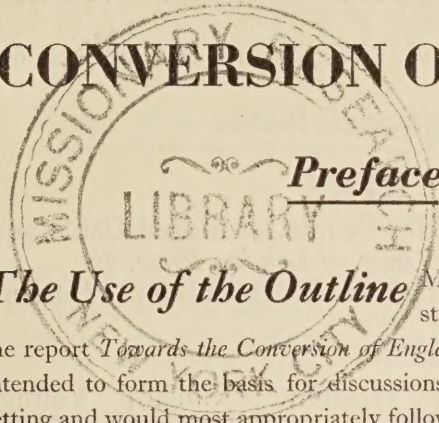
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CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

TOWARDS THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD



Preface

The Use of the Outline

Many parishes will have been studying during recent months the report *Towards the Conversion of England*. These outline talks are intended to form the basis for discussions on evangelism in its world setting and would most appropriately follow on the study of the Report. It is hoped that speakers will use the outlines as a basis for their talks, though in some cases it may be inevitable that the outlines will be read to a group in their present form. Similarly they may be used as a basis for a course of sermons. It is suggested that a series of six evenings might be arranged, one evening being given to each paper, followed by an evening for discussion, when the suggested questions, and others that might arise, might be tackled. It is of the greatest importance that ample time should be given to discussion so that each member of the group may be quite sure of the facts and also may be able to make his own contribution. It is further suggested that a period each evening should be given to Bible Study and Prayer on the subject of the paper.

Visual Aids

A lantern lecture, *A Faith for To-day and To-morrow*, has been prepared to illustrate the material of these outlines, and also suitable exhibition material. Bookings for either of these should be made to the Film and Slide Library or the Exhibitions Dept. of C.M.S.

Books

Some books are suggested for further reading and any group using these outlines is invited to write to the C.M.S. Librarian for particulars about borrowing them from the library. Arrangements can usually be made for a group to have a number of books for the duration of the series of discussions. (See list overpage.)

FOR FURTHER READING

On Christianity and Other Religions

- *Many Creeds : One Cross. C. E. Storrs. *S.C.M.*, 6s.
Jesus Christ and the World's Religions. W. Paton.
E.H.P., 1s.
*The Faiths of Mankind. W. Paton. *S.C.M.*, 2s. 6d.

Background Books

CHINA

- China, Her Life and Her People. Mildred Cable and
Francesca French. *Univ. of London Press*, 5s.
Face to Face with China. H. B. Rattenbury. *Harrap*,
10s. 6d.

AFRICA

- African Ways and Wisdom. Cullam Young.
U.S.C.L., 5s.
*Five Points for Africa. Margaret Wrong. *E.H.P.*,
2s. 6d.
Africa Pattern. M. Stuart. *E.H.P.*, 2s. 6d.
An African Soldier Speaks. Robert H. Kakembo.
E.H.P., 1s.
High Spring. Margaret Roseveare. *C.M.S.*, 2s. 6d.

INDIA

- Salute to India. J. Z. Hodge. *S.C.M.*, 6s.
India in Outline. Lady Hartog. *O.U.P.*, 6s.

NEAR EAST

- Prospects of Islam. L. E. Browne. *S.C.M.*, 6s.
Temple Gairdner of Cairo. C. E. Padwick. *S.P.C.K.*,
7s. 6d.

GENERAL

- Flying Visit. H. G. Anderson. *C.M.S.*, 2s. 6d.
So Serves the Church. G. G. Cragg. *E.H.P.*, 9d.
So Stands the Church. G. G. Cragg. *E.H.P.*, 9d.

* *Out of print, but can be obtained through the C.M.S. Library.*



CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

TOWARDS THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD

I. The Situation before the Church

Introduction The Report on the Conversion of England has been a "best seller" for it has reminded us of the urgent need for spiritual and moral revival in our own country if we are to continue to witness to Christ in our generation. The Report is rightly concerned with this country and with the particular problems which face the Church at home in this new age, but every thoughtful reader will realize that England cannot be isolated from the rest of the world and that the conversion of England is closely bound up with the Christian cause everywhere. Two world wars have impressed upon us all the need for thinking in world terms. What happens in China, or India, or Africa, has immediate repercussions at home, for we have political and economic ties with every part of the world. Truly the world is one in this twentieth century and one in everything but Faith.

But this lack of unity in the most fundamental belief about the nature of the world and of man's place in it is at the bottom of all our misunderstandings. The difficulties of the Peace talks are due to the fact that there are rival faiths in the same world. From what we believe proceeds what we do. Moral standards and behaviour are the fruit of faith and we cannot possibly agree about such things as freedom, security, equality and the like unless we have a common belief about God, for these moral and political standards proceed from our

religion. It is the belief of Christians that no world unity is possible until the people in every nation, who really influence the policies of their countries, accept the Christian doctrines about God, Man, and the World and are prepared to embody them in every activity of life, both in their personal and in their political relationships.

The Background of the Task

The Gospel is eternal and unchanging, but the conditions in which it has to be propagated vary from age to age. We cannot afford to ignore these conditions if we are to be effective evangelists in our generation. It is for this reason that the Report stresses the need to understand the current beliefs in England, those beliefs which are the product of the scientific age and are called Scientific Humanism. Unless we can understand what the man in the street thinks about life and its problems, we cannot meet his spiritual need. We have to discover the deficiencies in his creed and its errors before we can present the Gospel in such a way that he finds it convincing and relevant. This is what the Report does in its first chapter.

Our first task therefore is to look at the background against which the Gospel is being preached in countries overseas. We shall confine ourselves to the four areas in which C.M.S. works : India, Africa, China, and the Near East.

India There are three factors in the life of India that we must constantly bear in mind : the economic, the political, and the religious. India is a country with a population of 400,000,000, *i.e.*, ten times that of Britain. It is a rapidly growing population, increasing at the rate of five millions per annum. India is a very poor country. It is calculated that the average annual income per head is just over £4, compared with about £94 in Britain. For every twenty shillings we have in our pockets, the Indian has one ! A further very important fact that we must remember is that the great majority of the people of India live in villages and work on the land. It is in these villages that the missionary work of the Church is mainly carried on. There seems to be little chance that India will ever become a great industrial country. Its natural resources of power are strictly limited in relation to its size and population, and although great factories are being built, the country, as a whole, will remain agricultural. Perhaps India's greatest need economically is a more efficient agriculture in order that the spectre of famine may cease to haunt her people.

It is difficult for us to understand the close and vital connexion between the religion of India and its social and economic life. In this country, economic life has largely passed out of the influence of religion, but this is not so in the East. The social life of India is based on the idea of caste. Caste is not simply "class" in the English sense of the word. You must remain in the caste in which you are born and this means that you must do a certain kind of work. If you are born into the Brahmin caste you become a priest ; if you are born into the barber caste you become a barber. As is well known, the castes do not mix freely with one another but their relationships are laid down by customs and tradition. Caste affects economic life as this simple illustra-

tion will show. If a well is constructed in a village with two hamlets, one of Malas, the other of Madigas (both "depressed" castes), it is only too likely that one caste will use the well and the other will not, on the ground that it will be disgraced or polluted by touching anything used by the other—and that where they are suffering acutely from shortage of water. Another illustration will show the difficulty of improving the lot of the Indian peasant. Because the cow is sacred to the Hindus, no cow is ever killed. This means that the limited pasture and feeding stuff must be wasted on worn-out animals which are no longer milk producing. The quality of the cattle cannot be raised because there can be no selective breeding. Religious taboos affect every aspect of Indian life, and it will be impossible to make any real social or economic progress until there is a far-reaching religious reformation. Some of the worst abuses of Hinduism have been made illegal, but, on the whole, the British Government has refused to interfere in religious matters, so that 150 years of British occupation have hardly affected the religious and social life of the masses of India. Nothing has been said of Mohammedanism in this section because it will be discussed later on. The fact that nearly a quarter of India is of this faith does however greatly complicate the problems of government, and the failure of Hindus and Moslems to agree as to the future of India makes the political and religious background one of continual strain.

Finally, a word must be said about the question of nationalism. As India approaches political independence, the forces of nationalism are dominating Indian life and thought. Congress is the political expression of this nationalism but the Church is also strongly nationalistic. This is inevitable. Christianity has been looked upon by non-Christian Indians as a foreign religion—the religion of the ruling power

—and has been hated in consequence. Indian Christians are anxious to show that they are not less patriotic than their fellow Indians who are not Christian. This attitude is of great importance for the future of the Church after Britain ceases to rule India. It will mean that the Christian Faith will not disappear with the end of white domination but will be recognized as one of the religions of India. Numerically, Christianity is the third religion of India, with nearly eight million adherents, and there seems no reason to doubt that, although there may well be difficult days ahead for the Church, she will survive as an Indian Church, rooted in the lives of the Indian people.

China In some ways the background against which the Gospel has to be preached in China is similar to that of India; in other ways it is profoundly different. China, like India, is a vast area of land with a population of about 450 millions (*i.e.* a quarter of the population of the world). Like India, it is a country of peasant farmers in the main, although there are some very large urban areas. China is a country of great antiquity, with five thousand years of history, a country that has produced great scholars, poets, artists; and a country which is intensely proud of these things. At the same time, China is a turbulent land. It is never for very long free from internal strife. Because of its immense size and consequent lack of transport and communications it has been most difficult to unify the country under a strong, central Government. Throughout her history China has been subject to civil strife. Petty tyrants with private armies have carried on war with one another and have been unwilling to submit to a central Government. Even in 1946, in spite of the unifying influence of the Japanese war, civil war continues sporadically between the Chinese Com-

munists and the central Government of Chiang Kai-shek.

The work of Evangelism has to be carried on against a background of ten years of war against the Japanese. Practically all the developed part of China, her ports and large industrial areas were occupied. The Chinese leaders were driven into the undeveloped interior of the country, there to set up new factories, schools, universities, and hospitals. One of the results of the war has been a rediscovery of China's interior provinces, and a determination to proceed with their economic development. The new status of China as one of the United Nations has created a new desire on the part of Chinese government to increase educational and social services, and this has already shown itself in the sending of hundreds of students to England and America for higher education so that they can go back and develop their country's vast resources. There is no doubt that China is awakening and will be one of the great powers of the future.

We must now consider the religious background against which the Gospel has to be presented. There are three religions in China—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Unlike India, these religions do not cover separate geographical areas, neither are they mutually exclusive, as are Hinduism and Mohammedanism. Most Chinese, unless they are Christians or secularists, believe something from all three. This is easier than it might appear, for Confucianism is really a system of ethics and teaches rules of behaviour, while Taoism and Buddhism are religious systems which can quite happily co-exist with one another and with Confucian ethics. The religious background in China may therefore be summarized like this. In the life of every Chinese there is the ancient cult of ancestor worship which is even pre-Confucian. The strength of the Chinese family is proverbial and this is

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to a great extent the result of the extreme veneration in which ancestors are held. From Confucius comes an ethical code which has moulded the character of the Chinese and which at its best produces a scholar and a man of real wisdom. The common people of China are, however, more influenced by Taoism which in its debased and popular form is largely a mass of superstition and idolatry, and by Buddhism which does, at any rate, give them some idea of spiritual values and especially of the need for salvation.

Perhaps we might point in conclusion, to the similarities between the position in China and in England. Confucianism is humanism, and all that is said about humanism in the Report on the Conversion of England is true of Confucianism in China. The religion of the average Englishman is a queer mixture of superstition and moral teaching, and so the presentation of the Gospel in China shows some clear resemblances to the same task in England.

Africa The mission field in Africa is strikingly different from either India or China. Excluding the North Coast (which is Moslem and which we shall consider in our next section), and South Africa, which is the field of the South African Church, we are concerned with the equatorial belt, which includes the British Colonies of Gambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, and Kenya, and also Uganda, Tanganyika, and the Southern Sudan. In addition to these British-ruled areas, the C.M.S. (through the Ruanda Mission) has work in the Belgian Congo. The other territories of Equatorial Africa are mainly worked by Roman Catholic missions as they are colonial territories of Roman Catholic countries.

The size and variety of Africa must be constantly borne in mind when we are thinking of our work there. Europe, India, China, and U.S.A. can be put inside Africa !

The Nile is 4000 miles long. The Congo and its tributaries drain an area the size of Europe. There is every variety of climate and vegetation, from dense jungle to desert and from tropical plains to snow-capped mountains. Africa is peopled by many different kinds of human beings. Some have a highly developed culture and long tradition of government ; others are primitively communistic. There are hundreds of language areas, some of them very limited, so that in one diocese, it may be necessary to know at least three different languages in order to minister to the people. Some regions are very sparsely populated, others are as dense as Europe.

Unlike India and China, tropical Africa is a country without a history. Because of its climate and diseases it was impossible for the white man to settle there before the middle of the nineteenth century. There were no written languages in which to record the past, with the result that knowledge could not be handed down except by word of mouth. African society was built on the solidarity of the clan and all life was regulated by a pattern of behaviour at every stage. The basis of tribal authority was in the chiefs because they were thought to be nearer to the spiritual world. Land and cattle were held in common by the tribe, and the individual, with his rights and duties carefully laid down by tribal custom, felt secure in his membership of the tribal group.

African religion, with its dim belief in a high god, strong faith in ancestral spirits and an all-pervading sense of a spirit world, is a powerful conservative force. All life—law, politics, morality, industry—is regulated by religion. There is a large element of fear, but it is wrong to suppose that the African's life was totally barbarous and unhappy. He becomes unhappy and insecure when this pattern of life breaks up, as it must when it comes into contact with western civilization,

unless it can be replaced by a religion which will enable the African to make sense of this new kind of life. Hence the imperative need for Christianity in Africa to-day. The Christian community must take the place of that primitive community life which is rapidly passing away.

The almost overwhelming speed at which this change is taking place is perhaps the most important factor in the present background of the missionary task in Africa. In the years since 1880, the African has had to readjust himself to changes which have taken over a thousand years in Britain. The African, in sixty years, has passed from primitivism to twentieth century civilization. It is difficult for us to imagine the spiritual and psychological changes that this requires. Many primitive tribes are now exposed to the full glare of industrial civilization, mining, and wage-labour. Western systems of justice, education, health services are being introduced. Tribalism breaks up, communications and transport accelerate the process. The two wars have had a terrific impact upon African society. Thousands of young men have joined the Forces and have gone to the Mediterranean and to Burma. They have been educated in the ways of mechanical warfare and have received up-to-date medical and social services. They have returned to their homes demanding a higher standard of living. There is a rapid drift to the towns, with all that that means in the break-up of tribal and family life. It is in this rapidly changing environment that the Gospel is being preached in Africa to-day. It is only the Christian Gospel which will enable the African to readjust himself to this new way of life which is opening before him.

The Moslem Lands

Egypt, the Sudan, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, and large parts of India are predominantly Moslem and have quite a different back-

ground from any of the areas we have so far considered. Mohammedanism is the only great world religion which is later in origin than Christianity, and of all people in the world, with the possible exception of the Jews, those who follow the Prophet are the most difficult to evangelize. It is not unknown for missionaries to spend years in Moslem countries without making a single convert.

Mohammed was born in A.D. 570, and it was during the next century that his followers spread over a great part of North Africa and the Middle East and finally penetrated into India and Europe. The success of this new religion has been attributed to two main causes, its great simplicity and its emphasis on equality and brotherhood. Like Judaism and Christianity, it is also the religion of a book, the Koran, and this fact has been a great strength in helping it to spread. It has often been said that if the Christian Church in North Africa had retained its simplicity and unity, and if the Bible had been translated into Arabic, it is very likely that Mohammedanism would not have become a world religion and Christianity's greatest rival for the allegiance of primitive peoples.

The Moslem creed is a rigid monotheism. God is great and God is One. The holiness and majesty of God are such that no human can hope to enter into direct relationship with Him. He is to be feared and worshipped. Every Moslem must pray five times a day, he must abstain from alcohol and from games of chance, he must fast from dawn to sunset for one whole month a year, the great fast of Ramadhan. Those who believe in the teaching of the prophet are members of the great Moslem brotherhood, they are equals, irrespective of race or class. It is this emphasis on brotherhood and equality that attracts people of other races and especially those who are oppressed by white superiority.

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But side by side with these worthy practices go very deep blemishes which are implicit in the Moslem religion. The first of these is the inferior status of women. Polygamy is allowed and, as a result, home life in any Christian sense of the word is impossible. Woman is thought of as a creature of sex, her function to satisfy men's desires. The second is a fatalism that is a bar to any real progress. Since God is so remote, He does not come into the lives of men. He is not a Father Who loves and cares for His children. He is Fate and men can do nothing to alter their destiny. This means in practice that any social progress is wellnigh impossible in Moslem lands. It is nevertheless true that some countries, such as Turkey and Egypt, under the pres-

sure of modern civilization, have introduced education and social services, but this is in spite of, rather than a result of, the teaching of Islam.

One final point before we leave Islam. There are no professional missionaries who spread Mohammedanism. Every Moslem teacher is bound to witness and teach his faith to the people he meets. This universal witness is a great strength and is responsible for the fact that Islam is on the increase to-day. This is a most important lesson for Christians to learn. We are reminded in the Report on the Conversion of England that the clergy alone cannot evangelize this country, but that the laity must witness to their religion. The Moslem would not need such a reminder, he does it constantly.

Questions

1. *Can it be said that we are embodying in every activity of life the Christian doctrines about God, Man, and the World, if we are interested in missionary work in Africa, but not in the political and economic problems of her peoples?*
2. *"On the whole, the British Government has refused to interfere in religious matters" in India. Do you agree with this policy?*
3. *What more has the Christian religion to offer to China and India to-day than the design for living which comes to them from Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, or Mohammedanism?*

A list of books for further reading
appears on page 2 of the Preface.



CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

TOWARDS THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD

II. *The Church the Instrument of Evangelism*

Introduction

You will remember that the Report on the Conversion of England distinguishes between the stages in the presentation of the Gospel. The first is the expansion of the Church within Society, the simile of "the leaven and the lump." The second is the impact of the Church upon Society, the process which is best illustrated by the parable of the servant who went out into the highways and hedges and compelled the outsiders to come in. Both of these are necessary if evangelism is to be carried out. There must be live fellowships of Christians, otherwise there is nothing to which the outsiders can be attracted. On the other hand, a fellowship of Christians which is not actively engaged in drawing the outsider in, is not fulfilling its Christian vocation. We shall consider first of all the building up of the Christian fellowship in the four areas with which we are concerned and then go on to discover the ways in which our fellow Christians in these lands are engaged in the tasks of evangelism.

The Church in India

There are about eight million Christians in India of whom about 750,000 are in the Anglican Communion—the Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon. Christianity has been in India since the early centuries when it took root in the south as a result of the missionary work of the Syrian Church. This ancient Church still exists and plays a

very important part in the work of the Christian cause in India to-day.

The Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon consists of fifteen dioceses and is a Province of the Anglican Communion. There is no doubt that the Anglican Church has been connected in the minds of many Indians with the ruling power, and the future months and years, when India is taking up the reins of self-government, will be critical ones for our Church. There is a strong spirit of nationalism within the Church itself and this is finding expression in the demand for increasing Indian leadership—a demand which is gradually being met. In recent months, two dioceses have called Indians to be bishops, although the loss by death of Bishop Azariah of Dornakal has been a grievous blow to the whole Indian Church.

One of the most important events in the history of the Anglican Communion is now taking place in South India. The South India Scheme, as it is called, is of such significance to the whole Church, that it is of the greatest importance that Christians in England should understand the reasons for the scheme and also its main provisions. The opposition which has come from some sections of the Church in this country, although sincere, is, in the view of those on the spot, quite mistaken, for it fails to take into account the realities of the situation. The practice of the non-Roman missionary societies has been, for many years,

to avoid geographical overlapping as much as possible. The field was so vast that it would have been a gross wastage of manpower and money to duplicate work. The effect of this method was that converts in one area would become members of the Anglican Church, in another of the Methodist Church, in another of the Presbyterian or Congregational Churches. This system is only possible where the population is relatively stable and where transport and communications are in a primitive state. With the introduction of modern transport and, more particularly, of industrialization, there is bound to be increasing mobility and in an increasing number of cases people will move from one area to another. This must mean that a Christian, moving from an "Anglican" to a "Methodist" area must change his denomination. As this may happen many times in a man's life, it makes for most serious consequences. In addition to this, there is also the problem of the distribution of the Church's manpower and material resources. A united Church is able to plan its work much more effectively than a divided one, and it is evident that its witness in a non-Christian environment will be much more arresting. A further important factor is that some projects, in themselves essential to the furtherance of the Christian cause, are beyond the resources of any single denomination. Obvious examples are colleges and teaching hospitals. The need for training doctors and nurses has led to the formation of the Christian Medical Faculty at Vellore, a scheme that no single Church could have inaugurated alone. Similarly joint theological training is essential if the best is to be provided, for the staffing of theological faculties is impossible without a pooling of expert teachers.

Behind all these very real practical problems, there is the spiritual urge to fulfil our Lord's command "that they all may be one." The division of Christendom

is the greatest scandal in the life of the Church, and Christians cannot be complacent until they have achieved unity. The South India Scheme is the most promising attempt that has yet been made to bridge the gap between the Anglican, Methodist, and Congregational Churches, and on the success of South India rests the furtherance of similar schemes in other parts of the world. That is why this scheme is so important and should command our interest and our prayers.

The South India Scheme is no hurried and ill-thought-out solution to a very complicated problem. It is twenty-seven years since a group of representatives of the three uniting Churches began to work upon it. Every argument against the scheme has been carefully considered and although it is realized that no scheme can be perfect, yet the urgency of the situation makes it imperative that the Churches should go forward in faith, believing that the Holy Spirit will lead them into further truth. The first basis of the Scheme is what is known as the "Lambeth Quadrilateral." This is a set of four conditions which all the uniting Churches must accept—the Holy Scriptures, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the two sacraments ordained by our Lord (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), and the Historic Episcopate. The second basis is the recognition of all ministers of the uniting Churches as real ministers of the Word and Sacraments.

If and when the Scheme comes into force, it will mean that the four dioceses of South India—Dornakal, Tinnevely, Travancore, and Madras—will separate themselves from full communion with the Church of England, and that the South India Church will become an autonomous Church. It is sincerely hoped that in time this new Church will enter into a relationship of full communion with the Church of England and with other Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

Here then is one of the most important movements in the World Church at the present time. It may well be that greater unity of Christendom will be the gift that the Indian Church will give to its fellow Christians throughout the world.

The Church in China

When we remember the almost overwhelming difficulties that have faced the development of the Church in China, it is a miracle that there exists in that country to-day a Church with a membership of about four millions, including many of the leaders of the Chinese people. Several times before in the history of China has the Church sprung up, but each time it has withered away through persecution or civil war. The modern Chinese Church dates from the life and work of Robert Morrison, the son of a Scottish farm-labourer, who arrived in China under the London Missionary Society in 1807. Morrison, like all missionaries to China since, was faced with the exacting task of learning the language, and this he did so well that before he died in 1834 he had translated the whole Bible into Chinese. Morrison thought that it would take a century to win a thousand Chinese to Christ. As a matter of fact, when the hundred years were up, the Christian Church numbered one million and it is now about one per cent of the population.

The Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (China Holy Catholic Church) is the Church in China which is in communion with the Church of England and is a branch of the Anglican Communion. It is organized into thirteen dioceses, one of which is a missionary diocese of the Chinese Church itself; one diocese, Hunan, is supported by the Church of England in Canada, and three are supported by the Episcopal Church of America. Since the beginning of the recent war the leadership of the

Church has passed increasingly into Chinese hands, so that at the present time four of the diocesan bishops are Chinese. The recent appeal of the Chinese Church to the Church of England for £100,000 towards post-war reconstruction is a further sign of the increasing maturity of this "younger" church.

The mention of this request from the Chinese Church reminds us of the grievous losses that our Chinese fellow-Christians have suffered as a result of the war. The greater number of Churches, schools, hospitals, and universities were in Eastern China, and it was this area which was occupied by the Japanese. The Christian buildings in this part of China have to be refurnished and repaired. On the other hand, because of the great trek to the interior of China, the Chinese Church has discovered great new fields for evangelism in that vast area of Western China which has been known during the war as "Free China." In this newly developed territory, new churches and schools will be needed to meet the needs of those who have, in these war years, heard the gospel for the first time.

In this colossal task of reconstruction, the Chinese Church will need all the help that the western Churches can give her, but this help will have to be given in the right spirit, and the quality and training of those who go to China will have to be of the highest. China's main need will be for educationists, including competent theologians, doctors, and nurses, to help in the training of Chinese students. The Chinese Government is doing all it can to build up a national educational and medical service which will compare with the most progressive nations, and if the Church is to continue to be an influence in the life of the new China it is essential that she plays her part in producing Christian teachers and medical men to demonstrate to their

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Chinese colleagues the unique contribution that the Christian Faith can make in the building up of character. It is through the Christian school and hospital that the obvious contacts are made with outsiders, and it is through the channels of education and healing that the Church reaches out to the untouched masses. Christian doctors, teachers, engineers, social welfare workers, even when employed by government, are witnesses to the Faith and are one of the most effective agencies of evangelism.

The Church in Africa

We saw in our first talk that Central Africa differs from China and India in that it is not an ancient civilization with an advanced culture and a world religion. The African people, with a background of tribal organization and animist religion are feeling the full impact of western civilization. We shall see what the Church is doing to help them to make these far-reaching readjustments in their lives.

The C.M.S. has been at work in Africa for nearly 150 years. In West Africa there are now six dioceses, in three of which (Sierra Leone, Lagos, and the Niger) the Society is working. Four Assistant Bishops in West Africa are Africans and the consecration of one of them, Bishop Phillips of Lagos, in Lagos Cathedral three years ago was the first occasion on which an African bishop had been consecrated on African soil in modern times. The ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Capetown. It is events such as this which stand out as landmarks in the development of a growing Church.

In East Africa, there are now nine dioceses, the most recent of which is that of the Sudan, lately separated from the diocese of Egypt and the Sudan. C.M.S. work is carried on in five of these dioceses, the Sudan, Upper Nile, Uganda, Mombasa, and

Central Tanganyika, where the Australian C.M.S. bears the main responsibility for missionary work.

We saw from our first talk that African religion is now quite unable to meet the demands of the twentieth century, but Christianity is not the only religion which is competing for the soul of Africa. The Church has the dual task of fighting modern secularism (with its belief in material progress and its inevitable consequence of exploitation and misery for the poor and the amassing of wealth on the part of the ruling class) on the one hand, and on the other of preserving Christianity in Central Africa against the increasing pressure of Mohammedanism from the north. It is for this reason that the Southern Sudan is one of the main strategic frontiers of the Christian Church in the world to-day, for it is there that Mohammedanism and Christianity meet. C.M.S. is concentrating its efforts upon this area in education, hospital work, and evangelism.

There is a great and urgent need for more literature, so that when the African learns to read he will be able to read books which will help him to deepen his faith and live the Christian life. At the present time the only literature which many Africans have in their own language is the New Testament, or more often, the four Gospels. Although this is a priceless possession, it is obvious that it cannot meet the thirst of the African for further literature. We can imagine how impoverished our own lives would be without books. We must remember also that this void in the life of the African will be increasingly filled with undesirable literature, and that the effect of the mission school in teaching the African to read may be completely undone by the kind of literature that he will read if good books are not available.

The Churches in Africa realize that they are building up a complete civilization and

that the Gospel is to the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. It is for this reason that the Christian Mission includes schools and hospitals as well as churches, and why it does many things which in our own country are done either by the State or by voluntary organizations other than the Church.

One of the greatest contributions being made in Africa at the present time is to train Christian leadership in Church and State. This is done through the teacher training colleges, medical colleges and theological colleges, and it is in this direction increasingly that the efforts of the churches will be made.

The Moslem Lands

In Egypt, the Sudan, Palestine, Iran, and Iraq, the Church is planted in the midst of Mohammedanism, which we have seen in our first talk to be one of the most difficult environments for its growth. In each of these countries C.M.S. has been at work for many years, and the Anglican Church is organized in the four dioceses of the Sudan, Egypt, Jerusalem, and Iran (or Persia as it used to be called). If you were to go to these countries you would find in the larger towns a small but loyal Anglican congregation consisting of those who have been converted to Christianity—or more frequently, whose fathers or grandfathers had been converted before them. We saw that one of the great strengths of the Moslem faith is its insistence on the brotherhood of all believers, and the only way in which the Church can impress the Moslem is by creating amongst its congregations an even deeper fellowship than the Moslems know

in their own lives. It is through this depth of personal commitment to one another, because each is committed to Christ, that the Church is able to survive at all in these lands.

At the present time one of the greatest obstacles to the work of the Church is the increasing spirit of nationalism which in Iran, for example, has led to legislation forbidding teaching of Christianity in schools except to Christian children. The Koran has to be taught as part of the curriculum and Christian instruction can only be given after school hours to those children who so much desire it that they are willing to attend the classes in the evenings. This situation has not yet arisen in Egypt, but it may do at any time, and the missionaries who are faced with it greatly desire the prayers of their fellow Christians to support them in these very uncertain and difficult days.

In Palestine, too, the tension between Jews and Arabs is making the work of the Christian Church extremely difficult, and the fact that the children of both attend Christian schools is perhaps the greatest contribution that Christianity is making to the solution of the Palestine problem. One of the main opportunities of the Christian Church in the Near East at the present time is to act as mediator between Jew and Arab, teaching both that because God is their Father they must live as brethren. Needless to say, in such unsettled times when passions are running high, all our missionaries need our constant support in order that they may carry on their work of bringing together those who are so violently opposed to each other.

Questions

1. *What contribution has the missionary doctor to make which cannot be made by the non-Christian doctor? Is the Christian likely to be a better doctor than the non-Christian?*

2. *In the mission-field, contact with the masses is usually through hospitals, schools, etc. Is there a place for a Church which does*

not provide these services? Is there a danger that these services may be accepted, but the true mission of the Church not realized? (cf. Church welfare centres and youth clubs in this country.)

3. *In what ways can missionaries in the Near East help in the solution of the Palestine problem?*

A list of books for further reading
appears on page 2 of the Preface.



CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

TOWARDS THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD

III. Proclaiming the Gospel

Introduction In our first talk we discussed the background against which the Gospel is preached, in our second, the Church existing as part of the life of India, China, Africa, and the Near East. In this last talk we shall be concerned with actual close-up accounts of the way in which the Church is tackling the problem of evangelism. A great effort of imagination is needed if we are to enter with full sympathy into the process of understanding the Younger Churches. Perhaps the war has helped us in this respect and we should take advantage of the fact that many of our men have been overseas and have seen something of the work of the C.M.S. and other societies at first hand. Let us now consider methods of evangelism which are widely used in the overseas Churches, with some descriptive accounts of them.

India The diocese of Dornakal, on the south-east coast of India, is the best known area for mass movements, and as there is some confusion as to what a mass movement is, we might learn from Dornakal what is meant by this term. In a country where people are bound together closely by ties of social custom and religion it is almost impossible to convert individuals, for the social pressure from the family and tribe means that they have to become outcasts from their community. It is for this reason that in the mass movement areas the

method is to convert the village so that the newly converted Christians may form a community and strengthen one another in their new Christian life. Here then is a description of how Christ came to a village in rural India :

It is evening in the village and there is a great stir on. For some weeks past evangelists of the new faith have been preaching about Jesus. In other villages nearby people have been deciding to become Christians, and some have been baptized. Now in this village the great decision has to be made. The elders have been in consultation with the missionaries and have returned to report. A tall, bearded man stands. He is the chief elder and all listen to him. "My sons, hear what the great preachers have said. If we will become Christians we must give up all belief in our own gods, all part in the sacrifices of our village. We must promise only to give our children in marriage to Christians. We must build a house here for the teacher, who will come and live among us and teach the new faith. What do you say?" There is immediately a great discussion while the people ask what will happen to them if they become Christians, but at the end they decide to embrace the new faith, mainly because they have seen it at work in the lives of people in other villages. They have seen people give up stealing and lying, swearing and drinking, and become children of God, living His life, saved by His Son. So the teacher's house is built, and he opens a school for the children, gathers the people every evening for prayers, takes the Sunday services and teaches men, women and children, the Christian faith. He is the friend and adviser of everyone in the village, encouraging cleanliness, giving out medicine, and trying to raise their standard of living.

Next the village chapel is built. First there will be an expedition to the forest to get wood

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for the roof. Then the foundations are dug and the mud walls go slowly up. All the labour is voluntary and is done after working hours. When the walls are finished, the thatched roof has to be found. Inside there is a mud and stone altar at one end, and the whole building is white-washed inside and out.

Finally the great day of Baptism dawns. Every one is up before daylight getting ready. The men are heating up the village drums over a bonfire to tighten them, and there are sounds of tuning up the wooden pipes and flutes. The girls are making garlands of marigolds. The little chapel shines bright and fair in the centre, and all the houses have been cleaned. The priest arrives, the band plays furiously, the women sing, and the little boys let off squibs and rockets. They come to the chapel where the priest asks them many questions, after which they move off to the river, each one carrying under his arm some new white clothes. There is a solemn hush whilst the Creed is recited and promises are made. Then all are called in turn by their new names, family by family. They enter the river and come up again with shining faces and joyful hearts. They put on the new clean white garments and then process back to the village. When they arrive they partake of the baptismal feast and the Church has been born in that village.

We see from this account the way in which the Church grows as a result of mass movement evangelism. A few figures may impress this remarkable expansion upon our minds. In 1912 there were 15,000 Christians in Dornakal Diocese, now, twenty-five years later, there are 220,000. There were then a handful of Telugu priests, now there are 150 clergy. Recently the diocese has rejoiced, after many years of faithful labour, in the opening of its lovely Cathedral.

In other parts of India, evangelism is carried on through adapting the truly Indian idea of *Ashram*. This is a place where a *Guru*, or religious master, lives surrounded by his *Chelas*, or disciples, engaged in a life of prayer and meditation. A Hindu ashram would not engage in good works since they would only serve to bind man to his earthly existence, whereas the aim of Hinduism is to be rid of such ties. The Christian ashram therefore lifts

the Hindu ideal higher and it becomes a consecration of mind, body, and spirit, in the worship of God and in the service of man.

One of the best known of these centres of community is Bethel Ashram in the diocese of Travancore, where educational work, and, above all, evangelistic work, is carried on.

In the compound there is accommodation for staff and students, a school, and cottages where the children live in families, an industrial shed, a nursery school, a chapel, and nearby, a dispensary and a small hospital. All the members live as one family with the ideals of simplicity and self-sacrifice before them. It is a great power throughout the whose diocese—a real centre of evangelism.

The Christian school has always been a great influence for spreading the Gospel in India, especially among the more educated classes. Quite often Indian parents prefer their children to go to Christian schools because they know that they will receive the best education, both for the building of their characters and for the awakening of their minds. There is an account of evangelism in one boys' school in India where the head master started a Children's Christian Army. Its purpose is to inculcate daily Bible reading and prayer, and that the children should teach their own parents at home. Each boy promises to do five things:

1. To pray daily and read the Bible daily.
2. To attend the Holy Communion regularly.
3. To undertake some regular piece of service for the Church.
4. To work at all times for the elimination of idolatrous practices.
5. To take his rightful share in meeting the expenses of the Church.

The effect of this movement has already been felt in the help given to evangelistic work and in improvement in the services which the Church is doing.

Lastly, we may say a word about medical work. The Christian hospital is always a centre of evangelism since the doctors and nurses are convinced Christians and meet the man or woman at a time when they are prepared to think about the more serious side of life. Very often their state of mind is the great hindrance to the patient's recovery, and it is only when he gets a new vision and purpose of life that he feels that it is worth the effort of recovery.

The terrible poverty of India forces the doctor to think in terms of trying to improve the economic and living conditions of the people. Here is a description of one of our missionaries on the state of affairs in a village area where the medical mission is at work :

Here was a vast economic problem. Efforts to heal wounds, cure disease, and check approaching blindness, were hopelessly handicapped by the terrible home conditions of the patients. Here were men and women and children existing at starvation level, being swept away without resistance at the first onslaught of disease. By visiting their huts, and by searching questions the background of their lives began to be understood.

It is in these circumstances that many of our missionaries in India have to work. The conditions are enough to daunt the strongest mind. They greatly need our prayers if they are to continue to witness to the love of God in such a way that the Indians can believe in spite of all the suffering and misery which surrounds them, that there is, behind it all, a Father Who cares for them.

China. Here is an account of evangelism in China carried out a few years ago from the city of Hangchow and covering an area in which there were eighteen market towns—many of them quite large :

We try to visit each of these places several times each year. Some of us go two or three times each week to the country. At Chinese New Year time a party of us went out for over a fortnight and stayed in about nine market towns. We had daily open air meetings, and

services at night time, and we made a point of visiting any who we knew were at all interested in the Gospel. Shortly after these visits we had a short Bible school for inquirers when about thirty attended meetings regularly. Some of those who came to this school really seemed to be converted. It was great to see the change in them. Much of the work of evangelism is carried out in preaching halls which are open on nine or ten days each month when a market is being held. In this way, numbers of country people who come to market hear the Gospel, and often when the missionaries go out into the country they are greeted as old friends by those who have been to the preaching halls.

One of the missionaries in China gives an account of a tent campaign in the pioneer area of Szechwan :

A large tent, with all its equipment, magic lantern, two black boards of plywood, air pressure lamp, books and tracts, was packed on its trolley, and with three men pulling or pushing made a journey of over thirty-two miles, over rough country, in a day and a half. The town selected was a typical Szechwan country market town with one single long street, dull and sleepy on most days, but waking up most thoroughly to crowded, noisy and bustling life on the nine market days of each month. We had no believers in this place, but a church dispensary had recently been opened. We arrived there on March 20 and spent the rest of the day finding a site for the tent. We decided on the courtyard of the Temple of the God of War. The Taoist priest was most helpful in every way and came on many occasions and sat in the tent to listen to the Gospel. The meetings carried on for ten days almost continuously. On the nine market days the tent was crowded with people, many of whom were hearing the message for the first time. Our preaching dealt with the most simple and fundamental Christian themes—God the Father, Christ the Saviour, the Cross and Resurrection, Sin and Judgment, Heaven and Hell, and Repentance and Faith. We made much use of large pictures and sheet posters issued by the Chinese Religious Tract Society. 1800 Gospels were sold in the ten days.

As a contrast to this work in country districts we may quote from the letter by Bishop Stevens, describing the first service in the city of Yungchow after the liberation :

The congregation on Sunday was a tremendous contrast to the congregation in the spring of 1944. Now they are all poorly dressed, many almost

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in rags. Many of those who had money previously were not local people, and after moving away to the west are not likely to return to Yungchow. In writing the above about the Yungchow congregation, I think you may take it as a picture of the congregations generally in the diocese.

Another main agency of evangelism in China is the work of the Chinese Christian Universities. There are fourteen of these institutions, and C.M.S. supports three—Fukien Christian University, Lingnan University, and the West China Union University. Great damage was done to the Christian universities by the Japanese, but the news is that all of them are in the process of restarting. Lingnan reports that it "is back on its old campus and is crowded with a record enrolment of 791 students." During the war this university suffered in many ways more than any other college. It was literally driven from pillar to post. The West China Union University was itself unhurt, but had to act as the host to four other Christian universities from occupied China. Further, as a result of the war, the importance of this university has greatly increased, and the Government expects it to play an important part in the development of higher education in West China. The importance of the Christian universities in the evangelism of China can hardly be exaggerated, for they train the leaders of the country, and there is no doubt that one of the main reasons why such a large proportion of the prominent men and women in China are Christians is because of their work.

Africa The task of the Church in Africa is to replace the community life built on tribalism by a Christian community. This process has gone on steadily for the past 150 years, and we can see to-day, as we look back, that it has been the result of the faithful witness of thousands of European and African Christians, who have gone out to their heathen neighbours, bringing to them the good news of the Gospel.

A good example of the change which comes about is given by Bishop Lasbrey from his diocese in Nigeria. He says that when he first went to Nigeria he lived for some time with Archdeacon Smith. The Archdeacon was the first white man to enter Abagana—that was nearly forty years ago, when it was very dangerous for a stranger to go there, and the place was famous for its fierce and cannibal inhabitants. Archdeacon Smith wanted to see the Chief of the town and try to persuade him to listen to his teaching about Christ and to let some one come to the town to teach the people. The Chief heard what the Archdeacon had to say and made some promises, but at night the missionaries found themselves surrounded and heard that plans were being made to catch and kill their party. They managed to slip away and to get safely out of the place. Now there are many Christians in Abagana. There is a big C.M.S. school of about 500 boys, and the people have completed a very fine red brick church for which, for many years, they have been regularly giving, so that it is now completely paid for. Another example of this growth comes from Archdeacon Mathers, who has worked for many years in the Upper Nile Diocese:

In a church recently (he writes) I compared the present with forty years ago. To-day there are few spirit shrines; then there were no homesteads without them. There is much more joy to-day than then, and this can be attributed largely to the effect of church and school and all that they mean. Then the churches in this area could not have numbered more than ten and Christians fifty, while to-day the churches number over 700 and the Christians over 60,000. Then there were no Christian chiefs; now, although their Christian calibre leaves much to be desired, nearly all the chiefs are Christians. More and more men of character are coming to the fore and are leading in public opinion and efforts towards progress. The standard of living and housing shows a great advance also.

To-day the same kind of evangelizing activity goes on, but modern times require

revised techniques. We hear from the students of Oyo Training College that open air preaching in the market place is no longer effective, and the complete apathy of the people makes the students regard it as a tiresome waste of time. They have therefore hit upon the new method which they describe as follows :

We chose a nearby Chief and asked if we could come every Sunday to his compound. He was very pleased. His sons are in our primary school although they are all Moslems. We then worked out a scheme of teaching called "What is God like ?" which was illustrated each Sunday by the acting of a parable or other story. The students rehearsed them well. At the end of each play, one of the actors would stand up and say, "You have seen our play and we hope you enjoyed it. Do you remember the Father in the story ? Well, that is what God is like."

The idea is (a) to concentrate on one place so as to leave some teaching behind and so that the same people might come week by week, (b) to be concrete in teaching. It had been apt to be mere rebuke and exhortation previously.

One of the most effective ways in which the Church is preparing for the great changes that are taking place in Africa is in the training of teachers and pastors. Christian education in its widest sense has proved its value, but there is need for much more of it. The Government in effect is saying to the Churches: "You are not moving far enough or fast enough. Can the Church supply the men and women needed for essential development ?" There is therefore great need for Christian teachers to go to Africa from Britain to help in this work of teacher training and to staff the increasing number of secondary schools which are being set up. Recently plans have been made for a university for West Africa, and if this is to come into being there must be a sufficient number of secondary schools to supply the students. Here is a great opportunity for the Church to provide the leadership for the Africa of

the future. The task is urgent. In the Southern Sudan, for example, an experienced missionary estimates that we may have ten years in which to ensure the firm planting of such a Christian Church as shall outlive in quality the non-Christian community in which it is set up. But the Church cannot be planted firmly without trained leadership.

The Near East We have mentioned already the extreme difficulty of converting the Moslem to the Christian Faith. Here are the words of an experienced missionary in Egypt :

During the years that are past we have set up the (Anglican) Church in Egypt. It is small in numbers but grand in spirit for the most part. The Living God has used this Church and its worship and the way of life to make Himself known to many, and though it may not be very strong in evangelism, yet it does regard the conversion of Moslems as the main reason for its existence. As this Church is only a " babe in Christ " it could not stand on its own feet yet. How can we leave it ?

Throughout the Near East there are these small congregations of Christians witnessing by their life to their Faith, and although their Moslem neighbours may not be prepared to accept the cost of Christian discipleship, they cannot but be influenced by the example set them in the Christian congregations :

Even though we do not get converts, there is the daily manifestation of Christ's friendliness and friendship in us, and through us, in hospital, school, and club. Day by day, hundreds must see a glimpse of Christ which would be denied them if we were to go. People matter, and where Christ is the centre of the activity or institution, this fact that people matter is bound to emerge and make a difference to life.

In one of the worst areas of Cairo is the Boulac Community Centre. For years, in the midst of some of the worst poverty and squalor in the world, this Christian community has been showing the love of Christ in ministering to the needs of the people. Youths who would most certainly

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have drifted into crime, have been provided with clubs where they can get healthy recreation and the opportunity to discuss their problems with sympathetic Christian leaders.

The infant welfare work and nursery school have done much to raise the level of the children in this area; their influence has been felt in many homes where happiness, hope and vision have replaced despair and squalor.

Another evangelistic effort of the Church in the Near East is in the form of rural community work. The one-sided literary education given in government secondary schools is quite unsuited to rural needs. To correct this lack of balance, C.M.S. is initiating a new type of rural Christian education, beginning with a small farm school near Menouf. Similar efforts in rural education are also being made in Palestine, where the Society is doing pioneer work in meeting the mental and physical needs of the people in the villages.

In conclusion we may mention the work of one of the leading Iranian clergy, who was ordained about four years ago and has been specially commissioned to the pastoral oversight of scattered groups of Christians in villages and towns, far from the main centres of the Church. He journeys round to these scattered groups of Christians with a lantern and copies of the scriptures. Some time ago, while on this work, he was arrested on suspicion of being a spy. The police insisted that the lantern was a wireless

transmitting outfit! He was thrown into jail with a number of common criminals. The place was filthy, and the first thing that he did in the morning was to borrow a broom and sweep it out. In the evening he invited the local police officials, and any others who wished to come, and for more than an hour gave them a lantern lecture, using the slides which he had brought and the suspected apparatus.

It is men like this, who are themselves converts from Mohammedanism, who, by their witness and the fact that they know the Moslem religion, can best minister to their fellow-countrymen, and through their work the Church is increasingly taking root in new centres throughout the Middle East.

It will be seen that the main method of evangelism in this area is through the work of schools and hospitals. Medical recruits are the first need of the Mission and, given this adequate staff, the possibilities of evangelism through the development of medical work are immense. There are two things that impress the Moslem more than any theological argument. One is the care that the Christian Mission has for the individual as expressed through medical and educational work. The second is the quality of the life of the Christian community which is of finer quality than the Moslem religion can produce. For this reason the work of our missionaries in the Near East is an example and inspiration to us at home, for it is precisely these two qualities of the Christian Faith which are likely to attract our fellow-countrymen to the Gospel.

Questions

1. *What elements in primitive African society should be carried over into the African Christian community?*
2. *Some mission stations in the Near East have registered no conversions for years.*

Should these stations be closed, and the funds and personnel moved to more fruitful areas?

3. *Should the Church sponsor mass literacy campaigns, for instance in the "mass movement" areas?*

A list of books for further reading appears on page 2 of the Preface.